



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 14 August 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
14 AUGUST 1968

1. South Vietnam

Indications of Communist plans for an offensive continue to pile up. One intercepted message instructed a Viet Cong unit to complete its battle preparations by 20 August, then "wait for orders." A single prisoner also has said an offensive would begin on that date. Experience during the Tet offensive, however, showed that the precise time of attack is not usually given to field commanders until just before the action is to begin. Indeed, Hanoi may not have made the final political decision to launch an attack.

2. Southeast Asia

The recent ministerial meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations--Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines--surfaced disquiet over the future course of US policy in Southeast Asia. The Thais tell us that the consensus of the meeting was that, whatever happens in Vietnam, the US will "withdraw" from the region and the Communist threat will increase. Thailand is pleased that the other members have come around to its view that the goal of the association should be to work out both joint and national programs to confine Communism to Vietnam. It recognizes the difficulties in translating this goal into action.

3. Korea

Improved South Korean security measures are making it more difficult for the North Koreans to infiltrate across the Demilitarized Zone. Nonetheless they keep trying, and 26 infiltrators have been killed and two captured so far this month. Equipment found at the scene of the clashes indicates that the intruders were probably on missions to observe and photograph obstacles and installations near the zone.

4. Indonesia

The Indonesian Army appears to have dealt a severe blow to the Communist organization in southeast Java. During the army's sweeps this summer, a dozen members each of the party's central committee and the East Java regional committee were captured.

The party, stripped of almost all its pre-coup leaders, may now have to curtail both political and terrorist activity, although the army is not too sanguine about this. The Communists are still well organized in East and Central Java.

5. Jordan-USSR

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6. Greece

Prime Minister Papadopoulos was unharmed when a small bomb exploded near his car on Tuesday. This was the first reported attempt to assassinate a junta member since the April 1967 coup. Police have arrested a former army lieutenant

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The government now will probably keep an even stricter watch over the opposition as the plebiscite on the new constitution, set for 29 September, approaches.

Surprisingly, the head of the government press office has blamed not Communists but "people with fascist tendencies" for the assassination attempt.

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7. Uruguay

A recent decision of the Communist Party to sanction violent demonstrations against the government adds another unsettling element to the situation in Montevideo. The government has had its hands full with rebellious students at the national university. A demonstration by some 2,000 students on the night of 12 August resulted in an intensely violent clash with police and the Metropolitan Guard. Some students fired at the police at point blank range. The next morning students erected barricades.

Today the Communists and the trade union federation intend to join with the students in demonstrations and a general work stoppage. President Pacheco has taken advantage of the situation to ask the senate's permission to fire the university's left-leaning rector and his council. Even if the legislators agree, the students are hardly likely to calm down.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes

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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Xuan Thuy's Health and the State of the "Weather":
Xuan Thuy has been suffering a diplomatic illness for the past month. . Newsmen in Paris asked about Thuy's health at the North Vietnamese press conference on

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12 August. They were told crisply that his ill health is "caused by the weather and will be decided by the weather," a statement which produced a burst of laughter.

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Truck Traffic Down in Laos: The southwest monsoon finally has set in after one of the driest Julys on record. Communist truck traffic has shown a corresponding drop as key parts of the road net become impassable.

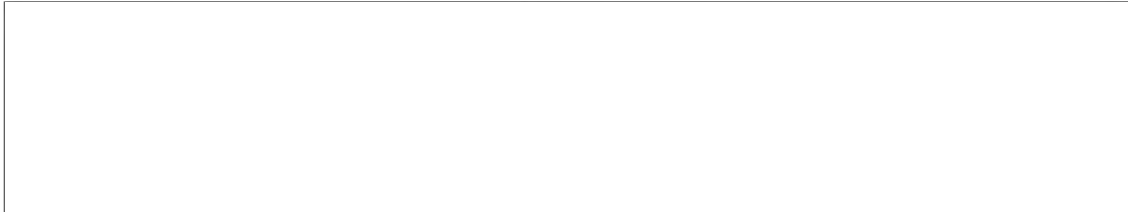
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Radio Hanoi Greatly Expands Broadcasting Effort: On 1 August, Radio Hanoi expanded its international service schedule, doubling its output in the Cambodian, Lao, and Thai languages, and increasing its transmissions in the mountain (Montagnard) languages beamed to North and South Vietnam. It also introduced additional facilities in the service to South Vietnam.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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